Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Nearly one in four part-time workers want more hours

The Australian Bureau of Statistics released today results of the survey **Underemployed Workers**, conducted in September 1996. The results show that of the 2,152,000 part-time workers in September 1996, 498,700 (or 23 per cent) wanted to work extra hours.

Some 83 per cent (414,100) of these part-time workers who wanted more hours, were looking for extra work and/or were available to start extra work in the survey reference week.

The survey shows that the average number of extra hours per week wanted by these part-time workers was 16.5, with some 63 per cent wanting to work full time.

In addition, the survey showed that nearly 48,000 full-time workers worked less than 35 hours in the survey reference week, due to economic reasons i.e. stood down, short time or insufficient work.

Of the two groups of workers combined (546,500), referred to as involuntary part-time workers:

- almost 56 per cent were female, although the proportion of males has been increasing since the mid 1980s (from 34 per cent in May 1985 to 44 per cent in September 1996);
- there were more older workers than there were in the mid 1980s (17 per cent were aged 45 years and over in May 1985 while 23 per cent were aged 45 years and over in September 1996);
- over half (54 per cent) were under 35 years of age; and
- the average duration of the current period of insufficient work was 51.8 weeks.

Copies of the publication **Underemployed Workers, Australia, September 1996** (cat. no. 6265.0) available from ABS Bookshops.

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